Our Boys and Girls

DWIGHT'S SAMPLE PAGE.

Dwight Dawson wrote and wrote. He began the work soon after supper and at 9 o'clock he put the stopper into the ink bottle with a little sigh.

His Uncle Harvey Dawson heard the sigh and looked up from the paper he was reading. He noticed the ink-stained fingers and the open writing book. "Do you have a hard lesson for tomorrow?" he asked.

"I wasn't studying my lesson; I was practicing my writing. The county superintendent will visit our school some day next week, and I was getting a page of my copybook ready to show him. I have put three times as much work on it as on any other page. Don't it look nice?" Dwight held the book up for his uncle's inspection. "I think it is a fine sample page."

Mr. Dawson made no remarks on the work. "Let me see the book," he requested. He turned all the pages slowly and examined each one. "What is a sample page, Dwight?"

"Why—why," the boy hesitated. "It is one that a person gets ready for an exhibition, I guess. That's what mine is for, anyway, 'to exhibit to the superintendent,' as Miss Lane said," he ended with a little laugh.

"There is the dictionary, will you kindly look up the word 'sample' and read the definition?"

Dwight turned the leaves until he found the word he wished. "Sample, a small part of a large quantity shown as a representative of the quality of the whole," he read.

"In other words, a sample is supposed to be a fair likeness of its kind." Mr. Dawson turned to the sample page. "Now, Dwight, that page is unlike all the other pages in this book. It does not look like your usual writing at all. You took a great deal of care with this page and you have not with the others. It isn't fair to exhibit that as a sample of your writing; that is a show page, not a sample page."

"Why, Uncle Harvey," Dwight gasped in surprise. "I thought you should always do a thing well to show to the county superintendent of schools."

"You should, but you want your regular work, day by day, done well, too. You can write very well when you try, but these other pages show that you do not try every day, but just for a special occasion. What if the superintendent should look at the other pages in the copybook?"

Dwight looked serious. "I—I had not thought of that," he confessed.

"If he should look at them, he would know that this page is not a sample page, and that you do your regular work in a careless way," Mr. Dawson laid down the copybook and took up his paper again.

The next morning when Dwight came down to breakfast he laid some money by his plate and looked a little shyly at his uncle. "I intend to buy a new writing book today; Miss Lane keeps them to sell, so we will all have the same kind, and I am going to have the first page for a sample page; I will do every page as well as I can, and not just the one, I will show to the county superintendent. He may see everything I have in the new book when he comes."

"I like that plan; I know your sample page will really represent your writing this time," replied his uncle, encouragingly.

"I am always going to remember that my sample work must be a good likeness of all my work," Dwightt replied, earnestly. "I am glad you made me understand what a sample really is, Uncle Harvey."—Sarah N. McCreery, in The Herald and Presbyter.

HOW ELEANOR SPENT HER BIRTHDAY.

It was Eleanor's birthday. She stood looking out of the window of her pretty room, surrounded by gifts, and yet she was far from happy. "It's mean, mother, that I should have a cold this time of all others. Gertrude always gives such lovely parties, and it's such a disappointment to miss it," she fretted.

"I know, dear; but when you are over the cold, you shall have a party."

Eleanor, however, was not to be pacified by any promises of future happiness. "I'm tired of dolls," she complained. "Every birthday Aunt Helen sends me a doll, and I wish she'd send me something else."

She gazed out at the shabby little house in the alley. "Some people have moved into the house right back of us, mother. See, there's a little girl at the window; and did you ever see such a looking doll?"

As Mrs. Irving looked, she saw a pale, thin little face pressed against the dingy little pane and a battered-up doll, wrapped in a shawl, held close in the thin little arms. The day was mild, and the little girl feebly pushed up the window and leaned out. Just then a Newfoundland pup came bounding up the alley, ready for a romp with some one. Seeing the girl at the window, he sprang toward her. She jumped and drew back, dropping the precious doll on the pavement. The dog seemed to consider it a plaything for his special benefit. He picked it up, shook it, and shook it again, and then ran off with it in his mouth, strewing bits of doll all over the alley.

"Why doesn't she run after it?" asked Eleanor. But the little girl looked after the dog with a distressed, helpless look and then laid her head down on the sill, and Eleanor could see that she was crying.

"I believe she's sick," said Mrs. Irving, "and that doll was all she had; she seemed to love it so."

"O mother, and I have so many! Mother, do go over quick and see what's the matter. Take her one of mine. I can spare it. Take Gladys."

Gladys was a pink-and-white-faced young lady with yellow curls and a dainty white dress with blue ribbons.

"Do you mean it, dear?"

"Yes, O yes. I'm so sorry for her, and I have so many that I won't miss Gladys at all."

Eleanor could hardly restrain her impatience as she watched her mother cross the yard to the window at which the little girl sat and, after a few words, disappear inside the door. The pale face brightened as it looked up at the window of the big house at Eleanor, and the girl kissed her thin little hand.

It seemed as if Eleanor's face had caught the reflection of the sunshine on the pale one opposite when Mrs. Irving rejoined her little daughter.

"Is she sick, mother? Is she very poor, and did she like Gladys?"

"Yes, she's very sick, and she's very poor, and you never saw a little girl as pleased as she was with Gladys. The little thing is a cripple. Her mother is dead, and her father has to work early and late. He dresses and fixes her in a chair before he leaves in the morning, and there she has to stay until he comes back."

"Mother," and Eleanor looked very solemn, "I'm glad she's my neighbor."

"Yes, dear, we can do a great deal for her to make her life less miserable."

"I'm sorry I can't go out. I'd go right over to see her and take her some of the fruit Uncle Howard sent me this morning. Oh! I know what I'll do. When Frank comes home from school, I'll ask him to fix me a telegraph wire, like the one he and Frank Morris used to have, and I can send her things that way."

It seemed to Eleanor as if four o'clock would never come, but it did at last and with it Frank. He entered into the plan heartily and went to work. It was hard to tell which little girl was most interested—the one at the plate glass window of the big mansion or the one pressing her pale face against the little pane of the rickety house in the alley.

At last the wire was strung between the two windows. Eleanor took a bunch of white grapes and a red-cheeked pear and put them into a dainty basket. Then she wrote on a sheet of her new note paper with pictures of children at the top: "I'm awfully sorry you're sick. I'm sick myself, but not all the time like you. I hope you like grapes and pears, and I hope you like Gladys. Good-by. Your loving friend, Eleanor Irving."

In a few minutes it came back apparently empty; but Eleanor found in the bottom a note, scrawled with a dull pencil on a scrap of wrapping paper: "You are so good to me. Thank you a thousand times. I like grapes and pears —I never tasted such good ones—and I love Gladys. I can't send you anything only my love. Your friend, Sarah Grey."

The next time the wire pulled, Sarah saw coming to her a square box. Her curiosity was great, and her big eyes danced. When it reached the window, she discovered some pretty note paper like Eleanor's, some nicely sharpened pencils, and another note from her friend. The next thing that went over was a book, one of Eleanor's best stories, for Sarah to read, and later a small bag of taffy, Frank's contribution, was sent over. Darkness came too soon for both girls, and then the wire had to be abandoned.

Eleanor and her mother sat around the brightly lighted table, and Eleanor was saying: "Mother, I felt so miserable and unhappy this morning; and I know I was cross, even though it was my birthday and I got so many presents, and now I feel so happy."

"You see, you forgot all about Eleanor Irving and her aches and pains and disappointments."

And Sarah sat at the window, waiting for her father, looking with happy eyes toward the lights in the big house and hugging Gladys close to her heart, saying to herself that it had been the happiest day of her life. —Annie G. Mahon, in Christian Work.

I will this day try to live a simple, sincere and serene life, repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity and self-seeking; cultivating cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity and the habit of holy silence; exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust and childlike trust in God.—John H. Vincent.